

COMMENTS BY COUNCIL PRESIDENT RICHARD CONLIN

Thank you. I want to express my appreciation to my colleagues for the honor of serving as your President over the next two years. Thank you for your support and confidence.

I would like to say a special thanks to Councilmember Jan Drago for nominating me. Councilmember Drago has done so much for the City that she cares deeply about. I know that she has a great commitment to ensuring that the Council is successful in carrying out our tasks. I very much appreciate her kind words.

I also want to say thank you to Councilmember Nick Licata for his work as President. Over the last two years, he has accomplished much in making sure that the Legislative Department runs smoothly and fairly, in developing new ways to make our work open and transparent for the public, and in keeping the Council moving forward in a thoughtful and professional manner.

We will have two new colleagues for this term. Councilmembers Burgess and Harrell have been through the test of hard-fought campaigns. They share long records of involvement in the community and commitment to bringing their values and passion into action for Seattle. I am confident that they will be great additions to the energy and effectiveness of the Council, and I know that we all look forward to their participation and engagement.

The next two years will bring great challenges to Seattle. Our nation is in a time of economic uncertainty, international conflicts, and a growing conviction of urgency about global climate change and other environmental and social priorities. America is looking for renewal, and Seattle can contribute our energy, experience, and talent to that quest.

Seattle continues to evolve as a City. We have the opportunity to be innovative in creating an urban environment that is a livable and vibrant community for all of our residents. We can build on the foundation of our thriving civic life by providing effective and authentic leadership that is guided by a few clear principles:

- That all of our people and all our many communities belong;
- That diversity is our strength and mutual respect our commitment;

- That every neighborhood counts;
- That we are part of a region that must work together to solve problems and create a common future;
- And that our future will be built on the foundation of the core values of our Comprehensive Plan – economic vitality, environmental stewardship, social justice, and community.

As a Council, we will work hard over the next two years to realize those goals. Today we are adopting our Committee structure, and Committees begin meeting tomorrow. Later this month, following the procedure newly incorporated into our Council rules, we will present a priority list of issues that the Council will take up this year. As President, my role will be to make sure that the Council fully engages the people of Seattle in our work, and to ensure that all Councilmembers have the tools and opportunities they need in order to succeed, individually and collectively, in carrying out the tasks that the voters have entrusted us with.

The people of Seattle expect us to be open and transparent, to communicate with them and with each other, to deliberate and to express different points of view openly and honestly, and to make decisions that exercise our best judgment to keep the City on course for a better future. We will do our best to live up to those expectations. We look forward to an exciting and productive Council term.